



## Sample Information Letter

**Dear** (school administrator/principal, food service director, or PTA Chairperson)

This summer the Texas Department of Health launched “Soda Busters,” an alternative beverage campaign. This resource packet and an accompanying public service announcement have been distributed to various sites throughout our state in an effort to increase awareness of the soaring consumption of sodas in the U.S. and Texas, especially in youth.

Soda consumption has increased to more than twice the amount even produced in 1974, and in the last 50 years consumption has increased overall a total of nine-fold. The average American drinks approximately 576 twelve ounce servings of carbonated soft drinks every year. Other figures show that:

- 1) children are drinking soda at younger and younger ages - a fifth of all toddlers and a half of all children aged 6 to 11 years are soda drinkers,
- 2) on average, teens have doubled (and in some cases tripled) their soda consumption over the last 20 years while cutting their milk consumption by more than 40%),
- 3) carbonated soft drinks are the main source of refined sugar in the average teenager's diet,
- 4) heavy soft drink consumption increases the chance of low intake of healthier beverages such as low-fat/skim milk, 100% fruit and vegetable juice, and water.

Soft drinks pose a public health concern because they contain large amounts of sugar and have no nutritive value. In addition, they often replace healthier foods and beverages. (Fill in your name/agency) is providing resources to you in an effort to help young Texans make better beverage choices. Please review the materials in this packet, and let us know if you are interested in finding out ways you can put your students' health first. To join the Alternative Beverage Campaign please contact (fill in your contact name here) at (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_. Thank You.